Air India services from Calcutta

843. SHRI DEBENDRA NATH BARMAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India is reluctant to originate its services or to touch at Calcutta; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

News item regarding country's telephone system

844. SHRI M. A. BABY:
DR. R. K. PODDAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item in the "Amrit Bazar Patrika" dated the 16th October, 1986 on the telephone system of the country;

(b) if so, how far the news item is correct; and

(c) if so, what are the efforts being made to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some incidents and certain statements mentioned in the news item are partially true but are very much exaggerated.

(c) Development plans are being drawn up and implemented through 5 Year Plans. Programmes for the 7th Five Year Plan have been drawn and the main features are:

(i) To increase production capacity of telecom equipment.

(ii) Introduction of electronic digital exchanges.

(iii) Other various measures such as computerisation of various services, induction of PCM and Optical Fibre system and Digital Microwave system in the junction network, itemised billing, paperless trunk working etc. are being introduced, to improve the quality of service.

A "Mission Better Communication" has been launched to improve the telecommunication system in India.

Eklashi — Balur Ghat Railway line

845. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to:

(a) what is the latest position of Eklashi to Balur Ghat Railway line in West Bengal; and

(b) the allotment of funds made so far and the details of the progress made till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The expected expenditure for Eklakhi-Balurghat section upto March, 1987 is Rs. 3.60 crores. The progress till January, 1987 is 3%.

Foreign airlines to touch at Calcutta

846. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI:
SHRI DEBENDRA NATH BARMAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have urged the foreign airlines to touch at Calcutta; and